

## BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The Board of the Washington Fire Commissioners Association held a regular meeting on Saturday, July 10, 2010, at the state association office in Olympia, Washington.

Members present: President Robert Skaggs, Vice President Sharon Colby, Secretary-Treasurer Miland Walling, Region 1 Director Joe Dawson, Region 2 Alternate Brad Langdell, Region 3 Director Dwight Vander Vorste, Region 4 Alternate Les Riel, Region 5 Director Steve Lich, Region 6 Director Jim Farrell, Region 7 Alternate Verne Pierson, Region 8 Director Keith Merritt and Region 9 Director Steve Neupert.

Also present: Bob Barnard (Thurston 9), Gene Carmody (Port Ludlow Fire & Rescue), Jack Hensley (Spokane 4), Richard Kistler (Thurston 7), Roger Ferris, Sandy Babcock, Jim Lux and Nora Eyllenfeldt (WFCA).

President Skaggs called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. leading the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. President Skaggs thanked Commissioner Ralph Rogers (Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue) for his assistance in providing the national and state flags at a reasonable cost to the association.

President Skaggs requested the minutes reflect that prior to this meeting, the WFCA Board hosted a luncheon for the Washington Fire Chiefs Board; additionally, the new State Fire Marshal, Chuck Duffy, addressed the Board and regional directors reported on activities around the state. President Skaggs noted no action was taken.

Board members and guests proceeded with introductions.

Steve Neupert moved and it was seconded to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Les Riel moved and it was seconded to approve the April 30, 2010 Board meeting minutes as submitted. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Miland Walling gave the Secretary-Treasurer's report reviewing second quarter finances, noting the WFCA is approximately 2% under budget. Roger Ferris stated the number of member districts is down this year; however, finances are on track to reach budget and revenue goals for 2010. Joe Dawson moved and it was seconded to approve the WFCA's April-June 2010 disbursements, check numbers 22954 through 23069, totaling \$167,116.42. **Motion carried unanimously.** President Skaggs accepted the financial report.

Jack Hensley presented the Health Care Committee report stating the committee has forwarded a number of action items for the Board concerning the plan and the 2011 renewal, as follows:

- *Early implementation of health care benefits to age 26.* The current plan provides coverage for children of active and retired insureds up to age 25. Health care reform mandates that beginning in 2011 the age be changed to 26. Jim Farrell moved and it was seconded to adopt early implementation of health care to age 26 for the WFCA plan. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- *Non-grandfathered versus grandfathered status.* The pros and cons of declaring non-grandfathered status were discussed, among the advantages being the ability to make changes to the plan. Discussion followed. Jim Farrell moved and it was seconded to declare non-grandfathered status for the WFCAs self-funded health care program. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- *Expanding life and AD&D insurance options.* Sharon Colby moved and it was seconded to expand options to \$75,000 and \$100,000 for life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance to fire districts in the plan. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- *High deductible option.* Jim Farrell moved and it was seconded to offer a high deductible plan provided districts agree to the conditions for participation which cover expectations and penalties for non-compliance. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- *Adoption of 2011 health care rates, including dental.* Discussion was held on 2011 rates (13.9% all plans combined) and changes to the dental plan (replacing the Traditional Dental with a PPO Plan, adding coverage for posterior porcelain fillings and covering 70% of the cost of crowns, which will reduce the overall dental premium by 4%). Jim Farrell moved and it was seconded to adopt 2011 rates as recommended by the committee, including dental plan changes. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- *Policy amendment allowing portion of district's employees to join program.* Based on a request, the committee recommended the Board allow a portion of a fire districts' employees to join the program in 2011 with the stipulation that the other group of employees would join as soon as possible. Les Riel moved and it was seconded to allow an employee group to join the plan provided the district signs a memo of understanding that the other employee group will join upon termination of their current health care plan. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- *Consideration of enrollment for uniformed city fire department personnel.* Jim Lux noted some city departments have expressed interest in joining the WFCAs plan and the committee recommended the Board consider expanding eligibility to include city fire department personnel. Keith Merritt moved and it was seconded to begin a study of city fire department participation in the WFCAs health care program. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Jim Lux presented the Health Care Manager's report stating health care workshops are scheduled for September and notice will go out soon.

Roger Ferris presented the Health Care Investment Officer's report reviewing second quarter finances; he noted 2010 numbers are much improved over 2009 with a 99% loss ratio. Mr. Ferris stated ownership the Forum Building has generated much more income through leases than any other investment at the present time.

President Skaggs accepted the health care reports.

In a follow-up to the Board's request, Roger Ferris reported that he wrote a letter to Pierce 16 stating the Board values high ethical standards among the association's elected officials.

Roger Ferris stated he met with Red Lion representatives regarding a three-year conference contract with the hotel chain which would provide incentives for the association, such as complimentary rooms, credits for meals, etc. Les Riel moved and it was seconded to enter into a three-year contract with Red Lion Hotel Corporation. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Roger Ferris discussed HR 5537, federal legislation aimed at resolving the reimbursement issue faced by volunteer firefighters when filing federal income taxes. Mr. Ferris suggested launching an email campaign to contact our congressional delegation in support of this resolution. Keith Merritt moved and it was seconded to coordinate with the International Association of Fire Chiefs to develop boiler plate language for WFCA members to use when emailing Congress. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Roger Ferris brought up the contract in which WFCA staff provide administrative services for the health care program. He noted the Board adopted this contract in January 2009 for one year. Keith Merritt moved and it was seconded to approve the administrative services contract for 2010, retroactive to January 1, 2010, at the same amount as 2009. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Roger Ferris announced the WFCA's 2009 state audit will begin on July 28 for both health care and regular operating accounts.

The meeting recessed at 2:10; the meeting reconvened at 2:20 p.m.

Sharon Colby reported on the joint WFCA/WFC Executive Committees' meeting held yesterday; it was a good meeting focusing primarily on legislative issues for the 2011 session. One of the topics of discussion was a possible return of proposed legislation to merge the Board for Volunteer Firefighters into the Department of Retirement Systems. The Chiefs did not indicate their position on this issue. Roger Ferris noted the WFCA Legislative Committee, at its recent meeting, reaffirmed its position by unanimous vote that this is a dead issue. The Chiefs will host the joint Legislative Day in Olympia on February 2, 2011.

Les Riel presented the Education Committee minutes outlining proposed classes for conference:

- ***Residential Sprinklers: Fact vs. Fiction*** (3 hour general session)
- ***How to Implement Impact Fees Through the GMA Process*** (3 hours)
- ***Open Public Records/Meetings Act*** (1.5 hours)
- ***Risk Management: Hot Button Issues*** (1.5 hours)
- ***Motivational speaker on leadership*** (3 hour general session)

The committee recommended the evaluation form include a list of class topics from which to choose for future educational programs, as opposed to asking participants to write in their own topics. Steve Lich moved and it was seconded to adopt the proposed class schedule for conference. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Roger Ferris reported the Legislative Committee met June 30 to discuss the top issues that resulted from the Roundtable in Yakima. They are:

- Simple majority EMS levies
- Volunteer firefighter license plates
- Support residential sprinkler legislation
- Partial mergers by petition—legislative amendments to clarify acceptance of petitions by respective boards
- No man's land—work with stakeholders

Mr. Ferris stated the committee will meet in September to discuss and review interim issues and he will provide a full report at the October Board meeting. President Skaggs accepted the legislative report.

Miland Walling announced the Budget Committee will meet on September 16 to discuss the 2011 WFCA budget. President Skaggs accepted the report.

Keith Merritt distributed minutes of the recent Fire Service Leadership Forum meeting. The Forum has determined it is unnecessary to change its role and responsibilities in spite of the elimination of the Fire Protection Policy Board. Sharon Colby stated the Forum is a valuable asset for the State Fire Marshal. President Skaggs accepted the Forum report.

Steve Lich stated the E911 Advisory Committee did not meet in June. He noted the article in *Fireline*, entitled *Know Your Location*, prompted quite a response as he received inquiries from individuals asking to publish it in their local newspapers. President Skaggs accepted the E911 report.

Bob Barnard addressed the Board regarding updates to 296-305 Firefighter Safety Standards. A draft will be available in mid-September and public comment will follow in Spokane and Olympia. The fire service will need to have a strong voice during the hearing process. The Board and President Skaggs thanked Commissioner Barnard for all his work on this issue.

Jim Farrell reported there were no proposed amendments submitted for the bylaws. President Skaggs accepted the bylaws report.

Roger Ferris presented the James R. Larson Forum Building report. He reviewed building finances, noting that a \$40,000 capital return was deposited in regular operating on June 30. Negotiations on lease renewals will begin soon. President Skaggs accepted the Forum report.

The Board reviewed its policies clarifying employee compensation time and bereavement leave. Les Riel moved and it was seconded to approve the policy changes as submitted. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Richard Kistler reported on the National Association of Elected Fire Officials announcing convention dates are September 19-20 at The Orleans Hotel in Las Vegas (\$37 room rate per night); meetings will be held at the nearby Clark County Training Center. Commissioner Kistler thanked the Board for allowing him to serve on NAEFO adding he will resign as commissioner at the end of 2010 so the Board will need to appoint another commissioner to represent the WFCA on the NAEFO Board.

Joe Dawson, Chair of the Region Boundary Review Committee, stated he received a request from a commissioner in Benton County to shift the county from Region 4 to Region 2. Discussion followed on this request, the time frame for reviewing boundaries (perhaps every 10 years instead of every 5) as well as the criteria used to establish region boundaries. The proposed change for Benton County will be presented to the membership at conference. Les Riel moved and it was seconded to consider criteria for reviewing region boundaries at the October Board meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Roger Ferris provided a list of non-member districts.

Roger Ferris brought up the Firefighter Memorial program being held in October. Joe Dawson moved and it was seconded to donate \$300 from Special Account to this program. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Jim Farrell moved and it was seconded to re-adopt the standing rules for conference. **Motion carried unanimously.**

At the Board's request, Roger Ferris reported that he consulted with the WFCA Parliamentarian who advised there is no need to have three calls for floor nominations at conference; therefore, the first call will be on Thursday, the second call will be on Friday and voting will occur earlier than in the past so that results can be tabulated and announced prior to adjournment of the business meeting.

Roger Ferris stated a letter was sent to Franklin 4 on behalf of the association expressing sympathy due to the loss of their fire chief.

Keith Merritt stated his region's finances are in the black and they have been looking for ways to best utilize the funds, suggesting helping districts that are having financial difficulties pay WFCA membership dues. Roger Ferris responded he thinks this is a good idea.

At 3:25 p.m., Les Riel moved and it was seconded to adjourn. **Motion carried unanimously.**